

THE PRINCIPAL
A C T S
OF THE
General Assembly
OF THE
CHURCH
OF
SCOTLAND.

Convened at EDINBURGH, the 24th Day of May 1781.

Collected and extracted from the Records by the Clerks thereof.



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OF THE
General Assembly
OF THE
C H U R C H
O F
S C O T L A N D,

Begun at *Edinburgh* the 24th Day of *May* 1781, and
concluded the 4th *June*, said year.

I.

The King's Commission to GEORGE Earl
of DALHOUSIE produced, and order-
ed to be recorded.

Edinburgh, May 24, 1781.

THE General Assembly of this National Church
being convened and constituted, there was
produced to them, by the Right Honourable
GEORGE Earl of DALHOUSIE, the King's Com-
mission, sealed with the Seal appointed by the treaty of
Union to be kept and used in *Scotland*, in place of the
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Great Seal of Scotland, making and constituting him his Majesty's High Commissioner and Representative in this Assembly; which commission was publicly read with all due honour and respect, and ordered to be recorded in the books of Assembly. The tenor whereof follows:

GEORGIUS, *Dei gratia, Magnæ Britannie, Franciæ, et Hiberniæ Rex, Fidei Defensor: Omnibus probis hominibus, ad quos præsentēs literæ nostræ pervenerint, salutem. Quandoquidem nos considerantes, quod generalis ecclesiæ Scotiæ conventus in vigesimum quartum diem Maii instantis convenire ordinatus fuit; nosque etiam abunde cupidi, quin etiam necessarium esse judicantes in commodum dictæ ecclesiæ, ut idem generalis ecclesiæ conventus, die statuto debite observetur, atque rebus magni momenti nos alio vocantibus, dicto conventui personaliter interesse nequimus; nosque abunde satisfacti de fidelitate et sufficientia fidelissimi et dilectissimi nostri consanguinei, Georgii Comitis de Dalhousie, quod ad summum munus rite exercendum et obeundum usquequaque sit instructus: Noveritis igitur, nos nominasse, constituisse, et ordinasse, sicuti nos, tenore præsentium, nominamus, constituimus, et ordinamus, memoratum fidelissimum et prædilectissimum nostrum consanguineum Georgium Comitem de Dalhousie, supremum nostrum Commissionarium dicto generali ecclesiæ conventui Scotiæ, dando et concedendo illi plenam nostram potestatem, commissionem, et warrantum, sacram nostram personam et auctoritatem regalem representandi, nec non presentiam nostram supplendi, et locum nostrum in dicto subsequente generali conventu, tanquam Commissionario nostro ad hunc effectum specialiter constituto, tenendi, omniaque alia ad imperium et munus Commissionarii pro generali ecclesiæ conventu peragendi, tam plene, adeoque libere in quovis respectu, quam quilibet alius ejusdem summi muneris fecerat, seu quovis tempore præterito facere potuerat, vel ac si nos ipsi personaliter presentes facere potuerimus. Quæque omnia et singula per dicto Georgium Comitem de Dalhousie, in hac commissione prosequenda legitime facta, seu fieri ordinata nos firmiter approbamus, et habituri sumus. Omnibus et singulis insuper dictæ ecclesiæ pastoribus, et præbyteris, cæterisque quibuscunque intra illam partem Magnæ Britannie Scotiam vocatam, subditis nostris, cujuscunque gradus seu qualitatis, ut dictum Georgium Comitem de Dalhousie, tanquam supremum nostrum Commissionarium, quoad effectum et modum supra mentionatum revereantur, agnoscant, et dict. ipsius audientes*

audientes se præbeant, stricte mandamus et imperamus: Atque hanc nostram commissionem, a dicto vigesimo quarto die Maii instantis incipere, et deinceps hac subsequend. sessione dicti generalis conventus, in vigore continuare declaramus, vel usque dum a nobis revocabitur, et exonerabitur. In cujus rei testimonium presentibus, sigillum nostrum per Unionis tractatum custodiend. et in Scotia, vice et loco Magni Sigilli ejusdem utend. ordinat. appendi mandavimus; apud aulam nostram apud St James's, septimo die mensis Maii, anno Domini millesimo septingentesimo et octogesimo-primo, regniq. nostri anno vigesimo-primo. Per signaturam mann S. D. N. regis superscript.

II.

The KING's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

GEORGE R.

RIGHT REVEREND and well-beloved, we greet you well. The uniform experience we have had of your steady and unwearied zeal, in pursuing the great objects for which you are assembled, by the most strenuous exertions to support the cause of true religion and sound morality, and to suppress all impiety and licentiousness, makes us embrace, with the utmost satisfaction, this fresh occasion of assuring you of our ready concurrence with you in every thing that may tend to the advancement of purposes so essential to the happiness of our people. Such conduct in you cannot but confirm our fixed resolution to maintain the Church of Scotland, as by law established, in the full possession of all its rights and privileges.

Your endeavours to promote the practice of real piety, of brotherly love, and Christian benevolence, will be much enforced by the example we are confident you will

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hold forth, in carefully avoiding all unavailing altercations and animosities in the course of your deliberations; and we trust that the wisdom of your councils will continue to be solely directed to the restraining of every species of vice and immorality, to the encouragement of virtue, piety, and obedience to all legal authority, as the only means to insure the peace, order, and happiness of the community, and the everlasting welfare of each individual.

The knowledge we have of the loyalty and fidelity of our right trusty and right well beloved cousin, George Earl of Dalhousie, hath induced us to appoint him again to represent our Royal Person in this Assembly. We felt an additional satisfaction in this appointment, from a persuasion that this choice would be most pleasing to you, as he hath given so many proofs of his abilities to discharge the duties of this high office, and of his zeal for the prosperity of the Church of Scotland.

There only remains to express our hopes, that the same spirit of harmony and concord will continue to influence your proceedings in the business before you, will produce the same good effects as it hath done in former Assemblies, and bring this meeting to as happy a conclusion: And so we bid you heartily farewell.

Given at our Court at St James's, the 7th day of May 1781, in the twenty-first year of our reign.

By his Majesty's command,

(Signed)

STORMONT.

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III.

The General Assembly's Answer to the
King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty,

THE gracious letter, with which your Majesty has been pleased to honour this meeting of the national Assembly of the Church of Scotland, was received with the respect and gratitude due to so distinguished a mark of Royal favour.

We bless the King of kings, that we live under the government of a Prince who is the nursing father of the Church, who affords the ministers of the gospel the countenance of his authority in pursuing the great objects for which we are assembled, and whose approbation they can in no way so effectually obtain, as by their strenuous exertions to support the cause of true religion and sound morality, and to suppress all impiety and licentiousness. We receive the assurance of your Majesty's concurrence with us as a most honourable reward of our past labours, and a most powerful encouragement to persevere, with a steady and unwearied zeal, in advancing purposes so essential to the happiness of your people. We rely, with entire confidence, on the declaration of your Majesty's resolution to maintain the Church of Scotland, as by law established, in the full possession of all its rights and privileges; and we trust, that, through the grace of the Almighty, our conduct will continue to confirm this resolution in your Royal breast.

We shall endeavour, by diligent study, regular example, and earnest ministration, to promote the practice of real piety, brotherly love, and Christian benevolence; and we shall be careful to hold forth these most essential virtues of our holy religion, by continuing to avoid all unavailing altercations and animosities in
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the course of our deliberations ; trusting that our councils, directed by such a spirit, will tend, through the blessing of God, to restrain every species of vice and immorality, and to encourage virtue, piety, and obedience to legal authority, which we are convinced are the only means to ensure the peace, order, and happiness of the community, and the everlasting welfare of each individual.

The appointment of the Right Honourable the Earl of Dalhousie, to represent your Royal Person in this Assembly, we consider as a fresh and signal instance of your Majesty's favour. We are not only satisfied of his loyalty and fidelity, from your Majesty's frequent and public approbation of his conduct ; but we have had ourselves the most certain and pleasing experience of these virtues, as also of his great abilities to discharge the duties of this high office, and of his zeal for the prosperity of the Church of Scotland.

We beg leave to return our most grateful acknowledgments to your Majesty, for your attention to the propagating Christian principles, and the reformed religion in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland. It shall be our endeavour to apply your Royal donation in such a manner as may best answer your Majesty's pious and generous intention.

Permit us to assure your Majesty, that we shall study to answer the hopes which you are pleased to express, by maintaining the same spirit of harmony and concord, which hath procured to former Assemblies the honour of your royal approbation, without which we are sensible that the good effects of our meeting must be in a great measure defeated.

That the God and father of our Lord Jesus Christ may protect your person, prolong your days, and continue your reign in the hearts of a dutiful people ; that, through the divine blessing upon your arms, peace may speedily be restored ; that the Almighty may power down his choicest gifts upon our gracious Queen Charlotte, his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, and all the Royal Family ; and that your Majesty, after being long preserved the watchful guardian of religion and liberty, may receive the rich unfading crown, laid up for eminent usefulness,

fulness, through Jesus Christ our Lord. These are the earnest prayers of,

May it please your Majesty,

Your Majesty's most faithful,

Most obedient,

And most loyal Subjects,

The Ministers and Elders met in this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name,

In our presence,

And at our appointment, by

WILL. DALRYMPLE, *Moderator.*

IV.

The General Assembly's Address to his Majesty on the birth of another Prince, and on the present situation of public affairs.

May it please your Majesty,

WE your Majesty's most loyal and dutiful subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in the national Assembly of the Church of Scotland; humbly beg leave to approach your throne, to express our firm attachment to your person and government, and to assure you, that the sentiments which we entertain are the sentiments of the people committed by Providence to our charge.

With the most lively joy and heartfelt satisfaction, we have beheld the increase of your Majesty's family in your Royal Offspring; an event which, while it contributes to your Majesty's domestic felicity, must, on that account, give pleasure to all your loyal subjects; but which, in a particular manner, must be felt as of the utmost national importance, by encouraging us to hope for a long continuance of those civil and religious blessings, which, as

British subjects and Protestants, we have hitherto enjoyed under the government of your illustrious house.

The tumultuous outrages, which, under the mask of religious zeal, have disturbed the peace of your Majesty's subjects, filled us with the deepest concern; and we heard with abhorrence the name of our holy faith prostituted to encourage acts of violence, which were adverse to its principles, and forbidden by the precepts of our blessed Redeemer.

While your Majesty was engaged in a necessary, though expensive war, against the ancient enemies of these realms, and against your own rebellious subjects, in support of the honour, dignity, and just prerogatives of your Crown; we have seen with indignation your ancient allies, who ought to have been united to your Majesty by the closest ties of religion, civil interest, and gratitude, not only refusing to supply your Majesty with such succours as by treaty they were bound to give, but even affording their assistance to your enemies, to enable them the more effectually to pursue hostile measures against your Majesty. We rejoice in the success which it hath already pleased the Almighty to bestow upon your arms, in chastising their perfidy. We indulge the hope, that this success may be a mean of opening their eyes, and of renewing the friendship which, to the mutual advantage of both nations, so long subsisted between Great Britain and the States of Holland: And we confide in the wisdom of your Majesty's councils, under the divine Providence, for bringing the present bloody and destructive war to a happy issue.

In the mean time, we consider it to be our peculiar duty, at this juncture, to cherish the loyalty and affection to your Majesty, and the zeal for the success of your arms, which prevails among all ranks in this part of your dominions; and to impress those over whom we have influence with a due sense of the blessings they enjoy under your Majesty's government, and of those duties of charity and brotherly love which they owe to each other, and to their fellow Christians.

That the Lord of Hosts may go forth with your fleets and armies; that he may crown your arms with victory; and that your Majesty may long reign over a free, happy,

py, and united people, is the sincere and ardent prayer
of,

May it please your Majesty,
Your Majesty's most faithful,
Most obedient,
And most loyal Subjects,
The Ministers and Elders met in this National
Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name,
In our presence,
And at our appointment, by

WILL. DALRYMPLE, *Moderator.*

V.

Commission to some Ministers and Ruling
Elders, for the Reformation of the
Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and
for managing his Majesty's Royal Boun-
ty for that end.

THE General Assembly did, and hereby do, nomi-
nate and appoint the Reverend Dr William Dal-
rymple, one of the ministers of Ayr, their moderator,
all the ministers who are members of the presbytery of
Edinburgh, Mr George M'Culloch at Loth, Mr Wil-
liam M'Kenzie at Tongue, Mr James Oliphant at Bower,
Mr Francis Liddell at Orphir, Mr Patrick Bennet at
Polmont, Mr William Tait at Kilbucho, Mr Thomas
Gibson at Kirkurd, Dr Alexander Carlyle at Inveresk,
Mr John Hamilton at Bolton, Mr John Lundie at Old-
hamstocks, Dr Robert Bowmaker at Dunfe, Mr Philip
Redpath at Hutton, Mr Robert Turnbull at Sprouston,
Mr Thomas Somervill at Jedburgh, Mr James Ford at
Lauder, Mr Steven Oliver at Maxton, Mr Thomas Smith
at Cummertrees, Mr John Dow at Canonby, Mr Robert
Aitken at Mortoun, Mr Bryce Johnston at Holywood,
Mr

Mr John Scott at Twynholm, Mr John Graham at Kirkinner, Mr James Mochrie at Colmonell, Mr George Smith at Gallon, Mr George Lawrie at Loudon, Mr Robert Boog at the Abbey Parish of Paisley, Mr Robert Bell at Strathaven, Mr Thomas Linning at Lefinahago, Mr William Anderson at Gorbals of Glasgow, Mr James Olyphant at Dunbarton, Mr Archibald M'Lea at Rothsay, Mr Charles Stewart at Strachur, Mr Robert Thomson at Killean, Mr Dugald Campbell at Glassary, Mr Donald M'Nicol at Lismore, Mr Normand M'Leod at Morvern, Mr James Bisset at Caputh, Mr Andrew Williamson at Argnock, Mr David Thomson at St Ninians, Mr Lewis Dunbar at Dunning, Mr John Kinross at Leacroft, Mr Robert Stark at Kinross, Mr George Shaw at Abbotshall, Mr Samuel Martin at Monymenal, Dr Harry Spens at St Andrews, Professor George Hill there, Principal Gillespie there, Mr Thomas Wright at Roscobie, Mr John Snodgrass at Dundee, Mr John Aitken at St Vigeans, Mr Daniel Bryce at Logiepert, Mr John Hutchieson at Fetteresso, Mr John Brown at Newhills, Dr John Ogilvie at Midmar, Mr James Gordon at Cabrach, Mr William Paterfon at Logie, Mr Alexander Stewart at Leslie, Mr George Moir at Peterhead, Mr Robert Ogilvie at Ordiquhill, Mr Robert Innes at Huntly, Mr William Peterkin at Elgin, Mr Alexander Watt at Forres, Mr Patrick Dunbar at Nairn, Mr William Smith at Pettie, Mr Thomas Simpson at Avock, Mr Patrick Grant at Boleiskine, Mr Donald M'Queen at Kilmuir, Mr Alexander M'Kay at Barvas, Mr Donald Munro at Lochcarron, Mr Hugh Calder at Croy, and Mr Alexander Hoffack at Jura and Colonsay, ministers; Mr John Russel junior writer to the signet, Andrew Hamilton of Spittlehaugh, Esq; Mr John Mossman merchant in Edinburgh, John Sinclair of Frefwick, Esq; Bailie Daniel Miller, Canongate, Robert Bakie of Tankerness, Esq; Thomas Dundas of Fingask, Esq; William Honyman, Esq; advocate, Bailie William Thomson, Edinburgh, the Lord Provost of Edinburgh, Conveener James Craig, Edinburgh, Captain Taylor, Queensferry, Provost Robert Clark, Linlithgow, John Dickson of Coulter, Esq; advocate, the Lord Chief Baron, the Lord President, Charles Brown of Coalstoun, Esq; Hugh Dalrymple, Esq; younger of North Berwick, George Buchan-Hepburn

Hepburn of Smeaton, Esq; advocate, Robert Sinclair, Esq; advocate, Mr Matthew Sandilands writer to the signet, Sir John Stewart of Allanbank, Bart. the Lord Advocate, Thomas Turnbull of Know, Esq; the Earl of Lauderdale, John Tait of Pirn, Esq; Mark Pringle, Esq; advocate, Mr John Gloag merchant in Edinburgh, Mr Walter Scott merchant in Edinburgh, Gideon Rutherford of Greenpark, Esq; Alexander Ferguson of Craigdarroch, Esq; advocate, Alexander Gordon of Greenlaw, Esq; Mr Alexander Abercrombie writer to the signet, Mr William Chalmers surgeon in Edinburgh, George Cranston of Dewar, Esq; Bailie James Torry, Edinburgh, Professor Andrew Dalzel, William Wallace of Sauchrie, Esq; sheriff of Ayr, Conveener John Lindsay, Edinburgh, Professor Dugald Stewart, Robert Cullen, Esq; advocate, the Earl of Hyndford, Mr Alexander Bell merchant in Edinburgh, Professor John Anderson, Glasgow, Professor Hugh M'Leod, Glasgow, Sir James Colquhoun of Luss, Bart. James Colquhoun, Esq; younger of Luss, John Lamont of Lamont, Esq; Mr William M'Donald writer to the signet, Donald M'Lauchan of M'Lauchlan, Esq; Dr James Williamson, Mr Allan M'Dougall writer to the signet, Professor Adam Ferguson, Niel Ferguson, Esq; advocate, Sir John Belches, Bart. William Muirhead of Herbertshire, Esq; Bailie James Gentle, Canon-gate, Professor William Richardson, Glasgow, Dr John Steedman physician in Edinburgh, James Balmain, Esq; Solicitor of Excise, Major John Melvill of Cairnie, Mr John Erskine advocate, Dr Andrew Duncan physician in Edinburgh, Mr Richard Lake writer to the signet, Mr Alexander Hart depute clerk to the High Court of Justiciary, Alexander Burnet, Esq; advocate, Mr Thomas Scott writer to the signet, James Cunningham of Hyndhope, Esq; Mr Solicitor General, Mr John Tawse writer in Edinburgh, Professor Thomas Gordon, Lord Westhall, Mr John Taylor writer to the signet, Mr John Robertson writer in Edinburgh, Mr Baron Gordon, Mr Isaac Grant writer to the signet, Dr Gregory Grant physician in Edinburgh, Mr Thomas Gordon writer in Edinburgh, Mr Francis Grant preacher of the gospel, Mr Ludovick Grant, junior, writer in Edinburgh, Simon Fraser, Esq; advocate, Bailie John Walker merchant in Edinburgh, Mr Colquhoun Grant writer to

the signet, Andrew Crosbie of Holm, Esq; advocate, the Procurator for the Church, and John M'Kenzie, Esq; younger of Applecross, ruling elders, to be a committee of this Assembly, for the reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, for promoting the knowledge of true religion, suppressing Popery and profaneness, and for managing the Royal Bounty, for these ends, according to, and in terms of his Majesty's grant to this Assembly. In prosecution of which purposes, the committee are to appoint preachers and catechists, to go to such places as they shall find, upon due information, to be the most proper, according to his Majesty's design expressed in his warrant; and, in in so doing, that they have particular regard to such parishes in South Uist, Small Isles, Glenco, Harris, the countries of Moidart, Glengary, and Lochaber, and the other parishes of the synods of Glenelg and Argyle, which the committee shall find, by reason of the vast extent, by the prevalence of Popery and ignorance, and other unhappy circumstances, to be in the greatest distress: And they shall take care, that the persons they employ be certified, and found, upon due trial, to be properly qualified for these respective offices, of good abilities for the same, of a pious life and conversation, prudent, of undoubted loyalty to his Majesty, and of competent skill in the principles of divinity, and particularly in Popish controversies: Such preachers and catechists being hereby appointed to be subject to, and under the inspection of the presbyteries of the bounds to which they are sent, who are to take care that the orders of the committee be duly observed by them. **And** the preachers are also appointed to catechise, and **both** they and the catechists to instruct the people from house to house, and to visit the sick; and, in all their labours among the people, to be careful to teach them **the** principles and duties of the true Christian Protestant religion, and the obligations they are under to duty and loyalty to our Sovereign King George, and obedience to the laws: And the committee are empowered to give them such instructions, as to their work and behaviour, as they shall judge meet; which instructions the preachers and catechists are hereby ordered to obey. The General Assembly do further appoint the said committee, to have a particular regard, in their proceedings, to the regulations
agreed

agreed upon by the committee of the Assembly for managing the Royal Bounty, on the 30th of September 1730, approved by frequent Assemblies: And to take care that presbyteries, and others concerned, observe the same, which they are hereby ordered to do: Particularly, the Assembly ordains the several presbyteries to insert in their registers, the committee's appointments of their designations, salaries, and stations of the several missionaries, and to have an exact regard thereto, in all the letters they shall write about the said missionaries, and in giving of certificates to them; and to direct all their letters, concerning missionaries in their bounds, only to the Moderator of the Committee; which letters shall be signed, at the appointment of the presbytery, by the Moderator or clerk thereof: And the Assembly does discharge any payment to be made of the salaries of the missionaries, except upon receipts from the missionaries themselves, and upon certificates from the presbyteries, bearing, That they have served for the time mentioned in the receipts. The General Assembly do also empower the said committee to apply, for the purposes above mentioned, what may remain of the last year's Royal Bounty not disposed of, by reason of any of the missionaries not fulfilling the appointments laid upon them; and that they are to keep a register of their proceedings, and likewise distinct books of accounts, how the foresaid money is bestowed, which shall be patent to any concerned who please to inspect the same. Of the persons above named as members of this committee, five are declared to be a quorum, whereof three are to be ministers. But it is hereby appointed, That at the quarterly meeting of the committee, in which the scheme or establishment of missionaries for the ensuing year is to be approved and determined, not less than fourteen shall be the quorum, whereof nine shall be ministers; and the said committee are appointed to have their general meetings at Edinburgh, the first lawful day after the adjournment of each of the four stated diets of the Commission of the General Assembly, within the Assembly ayle, at ten of the clock in the forenoon, except that day shall fall to be Saturday, and then the meeting shall be upon Monday next thereafter, at the said hour; with power to the said committee to adjourn themselves to such times and places as they

they shall find most needful and convenient: And they are to keep a correspondence with the Commission of the General Assembly, and the Society for propagating Christian Knowledge, and their committee of directors, and to take their advice and assistance; and also to correspond with the synods and presbyteries concerned. They are likewise instructed and impowered, as they shall see cause, to apply to the Government, or any magistrate, for assistance and support in carrying on the design of the commission now given to them. And the General Assembly do appoint Mr William Robertson advocate, Procurator for the Church, and Receiver of the foresaid Royal Bounty, to pay out the same as he shall be directed and ordered by the foresaid committee, and according to their rules. And the said committee are appointed to examine the accounts of the distribution of the Royal Bounty, and lay the same before the Lords Commissioners of his Majesty's Treasury, or the Barons of his Majesty's Court of Exchequer, and to report their diligence to the General Assembly, to whom they are to be accountable. And it is agreed, That no person once employed and insert in the scheme, shall be struck out thereof for that year, but by the quorum of at least fourteen, whereof nine to be ministers; and in case any complaint shall be made against any of them on the scheme, it shall not be determined the first ordinary meeting that the same is offered, but it shall lye on the table till another meeting; and, in the mean time, the person complained of, and the presbytery of the bounds wherein he officiates, shall be acquainted of such complaint, and those concerned be required to send to the said committee a just account of the matter against the next meeting. And it is further appointed, That after the yearly scheme of missionaries on the Royal Bounty is settled in manner above directed, and notice thereof given by letters to the presbyteries concerned, such presbyteries shall send up to the said committee their answer to these letters, at farthest with their commissioners to the General Assembly, if the same be not done sooner; and that the committee, at their first meeting after the General Assembly, shall endeavour to compleat the next year's scheme themselves; and if they cannot compleat it, they shall name a sub-committee of their number for that purpose, who are to lay

lay their draught thereof before a subsequent meeting, which is appointed to meet as soon after the rising of the Assembly as possible. And impowered the committee, at their first meeting, to reject any petition for a new station, in case they shall find sufficient objections against it; and that the said committee, in making up the scheme of missionaries, &c. do not exceed the sum in the grant.

VII.

Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders, for discussing affairs referred to them.

THE General Assembly, considering there are some affairs which they cannot overtake, do hereby nominate and appoint the Rev. Dr William Dalrymple, one of the ministers of Ayr, their moderator; from the presbytery of Dornock, Mr George M'Culloch at Loth, Mr George Rennie at Creech, ministers, Mr John Russell junior writer to the signet, ruling elder; from the burgh of Dornock, Andrew Hamilton of Spittlehaugh, Esq; from the presbytery of Tongue, Mr William M'Kenzie at Tong, Mr James Dingwall at Farr, ministers, Mr John Mossman, merchant in Edinburgh, ruling elder; from the presbytery of Caithness, Mr James Oliphant at Bower, Mr John Morison at Canisbay, ministers, John Sinclair of Freswick, Esq; ruling elder; from the burgh of Wick, Baillie Daniel Miller, in Canongate; from the presbytery of Kirkwall, Mr John Scollay at St Andrews, Mr James Alison at Holm, ministers, Robert Baikie of Tankerness, Esq; ruling elder; from the burgh of Kirkwall, Thomas Dundas of Fingask, Esq; from the presbytery of Cairstone, Mr Francis Liddell at Orphir, Mr John Falconar at Stromness, ministers, William Honyman, Esq; advocate, ruling elder; from the presbytery of Edinburgh, Mr Alexander Bryce at Kirknewtown and East Calder,

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Mr

Mr Robert Fisher at Collington, Mr James Craig at Currie, Dr David Johnstone at North Leith, Mr John Kemp Edinburgh, Mr Robert Walker junior at Cramond, ministers, Thomas Hog, Esq; Bailie William Thomson, Mr David Johnstone, ruling elders; from the city of Edinburgh, the Right Hon. the Lord Provost and Conveener James Craig; from the University of Edinburgh, Dr Andrew Hunter Professor of Divinity there; from the presbytery of Linlithgow, Mr Patrick Bennet at Polmont, Mr John Knox at Slamannan, Mr Thomas Robertson at Dalmeny, Mr Walter Jardine at Bathgate, ministers, Captain Taylor in Queensferry, and Bailie Napier in Linlithgow, ruling elders; from the burgh of Linlithgow, Provost Robert Clerk; from the burgh of Queensferry, Mr Archibald Stewart senior merchant there; from the presbytery of Biggar, Mr William Tait at Kilbucho, Mr John Bradfoot at Dunfyre, Mr John Thomson at Walsstone, ministers, John Dickson of Coulter, Esq; advocate, ruling elder; from the presbytery of Peebles, Mr Thomas Gibson at Kirkurd, Mr William Welsh at Mannor, ministers, the Right Hon. the Lord Chief Baron, ruling elder; from the presbytery of Dalkeith, Dr Alexander Carlyle at Inveresk, Mr John Goldie at Temple, Mr William Paul at Newbattle, ministers, the Right Hon. the Lord President, ruling elder; from the presbytery of Haddington, Mr John Hamilton at Bolton, Mr Francis Cowan at Gladesmuir, Mr Patrick Carfrae at Moreham, ministers, Charles Brown of Coalston, Esq; ruling elder; from the burgh of North Berwick, Hugh Dalrymple, Esq; younger of North Berwick; from the presbytery of Dunbar, Mr John Lundie at Oldhamstocks, Mr John Ewart at Whittingham, ministers, George Buchan Hepburn of Smeaton, Esq; advocate, ruling elder; from the burgh of Dunbar, Robert Sinclair, Esq; advocate; from the presbytery of Dunfermline, Dr Robert Bowmaker at Dunfermline, Mr John Sked at Abbay, ministers, Mathew Sandilands of Couston, Esq; ruling elder; from the presbytery of Churnside, Mr Philip Redpath at Hutton, Mr William Redpath at Edrom, ministers, Sir John Stewart of Allanbank, Bart. ruling elder; from the presbytery of Kelso, Mr Robert Turnbull at Sprouston, Mr William Simpson at Morebattle, ministers, the Lord Advocate, ruling elder; from the presbytery of Jedburgh,

Mr

Mr Robert Muirhead at Southdean, Mr Thomas Somerville at Jedburgh, Mr Alexander Gordon at Kirkton, ministers, Thomas Turnbull of Know, Esq; ruling elder; from the burgh of Jedburgh, the Right Hon. the Earl of Lauderdale; from the presbytery of Lauder, Mr James Ford at Lauder, Mr Robert Dawson at Stow, ministers, Mr Patrick Wetherstone tenant in East Moriston, ruling elder; from the burgh of Lauder, John Tait of Pirn, Esq; from the presbytery of Selkirk, Mr Stephen Oliver at Maxton, Mr Thomas Robertson at Selkirk, ministers, Mark Pringle, Esq; advocate, ruling elder; from the burgh of Selkirk, Mr John Gloag merchant in Edinburgh; from the presbytery of Annan, Mr Thomas Smith at Cummertrees, Mr John Craig at Kirkpatrick-Fleming, ministers, Sir William Maxwell of Springkell, Bart. ruling elder; from the burgh of Annan, Mr Walter Scott merchant in Edinburgh; from the presbytery of Langholm, Mr John Dowe at Canonby, Mr William Little at Westerkirk, ministers, Gideon Rutherford of Greenpark, Esq; ruling elder; from the presbytery of Penpont, Mr Robert Aitken at Mortoun, Mr John Robertson at Kirkonell, ministers, Mr Thomas Harkness in Mitchellacks, ruling elder; from the presbytery of Dumfries, Mr Bryce Johnston at Holywood, Mr John Williamson at Tinwall, Mr William Burnside at Dumfries, ministers, Mr Robert Jackson printer in Dumfries, ruling elder; from the burgh of Dumfries, Alexander Ferguson of Craigdarroch, Esq; advocate; from the presbytery of Kirkcudbright, Mr John Gillespie at Ketts, Mr John Scott at Twynholme, Mr Nathaniel Mackie at Balmaclellan, ministers, Alexander Gordon of Greenlaw, Esq; ruling elder; from the burgh of Kirkcudbright, Mr Alexander Abercrombie writer to the signet; from the burgh of New Galloway, Mr William Chalmers Surgeon in Edinburgh; from the presbytery of Wigton, Mr John Graham at Kirkinner, Mr John Ingles at Kirkmabreck, ministers, Mr Patrick Dickson tenant in Blairbowie, ruling elder; from the burgh of Wigton, George Cranston of Dewar, Esq; from the burgh of Whithorn, Bailie James Torry merchant in Edinburgh; from the presbytery of Stranrawer, Mr James Mochrie at Calmonnell, Mr Robert Callender at Kirkmaden, ministers, Professor Andrew Dalzel, ruling elder; from the burgh of Stranrawer,

Stranrawer, Conveener John Lindsay Edinburgh; from the presbytery of Ayr, Mr John Ramsay at Kirkmichael, Mr John Shepherd at Muirkirk, Mr George Smith at Galston, Mr William Peebles at Newtown of Ayr, ministers, John Hamilton of Bargeny, Esq; and Mr William Wallace sheriff of Ayrshire, ruling elders; from the burgh of Ayr, Mr Dougal Stewart Professor of Mathematics in the University of Edinburgh; from the presbytery of Irvine, Mr George Laurie at Loudon, Mr James Richmond at Irvine, Mr Thomas Brisbane at Dunlop, ministers, Bailie John Parker merchant in Kilmarnock, ruling elder; from the presbytery of Paisley, Mr Robert Boog at the Abbey parish, Mr John Forrest at Port Glasgow, Mr John Finlay at Paisley, ministers, Bailie John Orr manufacturer in Paisley, ruling elder; from the burgh of Renfrew, Mr Robert King, eldest bailie of the burgh of Renfrew; from the presbytery of Hamilton, Mr Robert Bell at Strathaven, Mr David Connell at Kilbride, Mr Laurens Wells at Shotts, ministers, Robert Cullen Esq; advocate, ruling elder; from the presbytery of Lanark, Mr Thomas Linning at Lesmahago, Mr James Ferguson at Pettinain, ministers, the Right Hon. the Earl of Hyndford, ruling elder; from the burgh of Lanark, Mr Alexander Bell merchant in Edinburgh; from the presbytery of Glasgow, Mr Alexander Dun at Calder, Mr John Telfer at Kilfyth, Mr William Anderson at Gorbals, Mr James Forlong at Rutherglen, ministers, Professor John Anderson and Conveener John Jamieson, ruling elders; from the University of Glasgow, Professor Hugh M'Leod; from the presbytery of Dumbarton, Mr George Drummond at Roseneath, Mr James Oliphant at Dumbarton, Mr Gordon Stewart at Bonhill, ministers, Sir James Colquhoun of Luss, Bart. ruling elder; from the burgh of Dumbarton, James Colquhoun Esq; younger, of Luss; from the presbytery of Dunoon, Mr Archibald M'Lea at Rothsay, Mr Charles Stewart at Strachur, ministers, John Lamont of Lamont, Esq; ruling elder; from the presbytery of Kintyre, Mr Robert Thomson at Killean, Mr George Robertson at Campbelton, Mr Alexander Holfack at Jura and Colonsay, ministers, Mr William M'Donald writer to the signet, ruling elder; from the burgh of Campbelton, Mr Solicitor General; from the presbytery of Inverary, Mr Archibald Campbell at North Knapdale,

Knapdale, Mr Dugald Campbell at Glassary, ministers, Donald M'Lauchlan of M'Lauchlan, Esq; ruling elder; from the burgh of Inverary, Dr James Williamson; from the presbytery of Lorn, Mr Donald M'Nicol at Lismore, Mr Joseph M'Intyre at Glenorchy, ministers, Colonel Robert Campbell of Monzie, ruling elder; from the presbytery of Mull, Mr Patrick M'Arthur at Torosay, Mr Norman M'Leod at Morvern, ministers, Allan M'Dougal of Gallanich, Esq; ruling elder; from the presbytery of Dunkeld, Mr James Bisset at Caputh, Mr Robert Williamson at Lethindie, Mr James M'Laggan at Blair Athol, Mr John Scott at Kinclaven, ministers, Professor Adam Ferguson and Niel Ferguson, Esq; advocate, ruling elders; from the presbytery of Perth, Mr Andrew Williamson at Arngosk, Mr David Dow at Dron, Mr David Beatson at Dumbarnie, Mr William Duncan at Abernethy, ministers, Sir John Belsches, Bart. and Mr John Caw Dean of Guild of Perth, ruling elders; from the presbytery of Stirling, Mr David Thomson at St Ninians, Mr Walter Buchanan at Stirling, ministers, William Muirhead of Herbertshire, ruling elder; from the presbytery of Auchterarder, Mr Lewis Dunbar at Dunning, Mr John Wright at Trinity Gask, Mr William Graham at Fossoway, ministers, Bailie James Gentle brewer in Canongate, ruling elder; from the presbytery of Dumblane, Mr David Davidson at Kippen, Mr John Kinross at Lecropt, ministers, Professor William Richardson at Glasgow, ruling elder; from the presbytery of Dunfermline, Mr Robert Stark at Kinross, Mr Thomas Fernie at Dunfermline, Mr Alexander Thomson at Carnock, ministers, Dr John Steedman physician in Edinburgh, ruling elder; from the burgh of Dunfermline, Bailie William Hutton merchant there; from the presbytery of Kirkcaldie, Mr George Shaw at Abbotshall, Mr Thomas Hardie at Balingry, Mr John Usher at Kinghorn, ministers, James Townsend Oswald of Dumnikeir, Esq; ruling elder; from the burgh of Kirkcaldie, Mr James Fergus merchant there; from the burgh of Kinghorn, James Balmain, Esq; Solicitor of Excise; from the burgh of Dyfart, Mr John Erskine advocate; from the presbytery of Cupar, Mr George Lyon at Strathmiglo, Mr Samuel Martin at Monymenal, Mr Robert Arnot at Ceres, Mr Thomas Spankie at Falkland, ministers,

William Peaston of Soutra, and James Walker of Daftmiln, Esquires, ruling elders ; from the burgh of Cupar, Major John Melvill of Carnie ; from the presbytery of St Andrews, Dr Hary Spens professor of divinity, Mr Robert Dalglish at Ferryparton-Craigs, Mr Thomas Kettle at Leuchars, Professor George Hill, ministers, Dr James Flint, professor of medicine, and Mr Thomas Ballardie shipmaster in Anstruther Easter, ruling elders ; from the burgh of St Andrews, Dr Andrew Duncan physician in Edinburgh ; from the university of St Andrews, Principal Gillespie ; from the presbytery of Forfar, Mr Thomas Wright at Roscobie, Mr James Lyon at Glamis, ministers, George Dempster of Dunnichen, Esq; ruling elder ; from the presbytery of Dundee, Mr John Snodgrass at Dundee, Mr James Scott at Auchterhouse, Mr Alexander Strahan at Strathmartine, ministers, Mr Andrew Pitcairn writer in Dundee, ruling elder ; from the presbytery of Aberbrothock, Mr John Aitken at St Vigean, Mr William Milligan at Kirkden, ministers, Mr Richard Lake writer to the signet, ruling elder ; from the burgh of Aberbrothock, Mr Alexander Hart clerk to the High Court of Justiciary ; from the presbytery of Brechin, Mr James Lauder at Dun, Mr Daniel Bryce at Logiepert, Mr Charles Nisbet at Montrose, ministers, Alexander Burnet, Esq; advocate, ruling elder ; from the presbytery of Fordoun, Mr John Hutchieson at Fetteresso, Mr Robert Foot at Fettercairn, Mr Alexander Thom at Glenbervie, ministers, Mr Thomas Scott writer to the signet, ruling elder ; from the burgh of Bervie, the Hon. Sir William Augustus Cunnyngnam of Livingston, Bart. ; from the presbytery of Aberdeen, Mr John Brown at Newhills, Mr John Fullarton at Drummoak, Mr Robert Dunbar at Oldmachar, Mr James Sherriffs at Aberdeen, ministers, James Cunningham of Hyndhope and George Strahan-Kelth, Esquires, ruling elders ; from the presbytery of Kincardine O'neil, Dr John Ogilvie at Midmar, Mr John Ramsay at Strahan, Mr William Shand at Lumphannan, ministers, Mr William M'Donald of Rinettan, ruling elder ; from the presbytery of Alford, Mr James Gordon at Cabrach, Mr Robert Lumsden at Kildrummy, Mr Thomas Tait at Auchindore, ministers, Mr John Tawse writer in Edinburgh, ruling elder ; from the presbytery

presbytery of Ellon, Mr William Paterfon at Logie, Mr Alexander Cock at Cruden, ministers, Professor Thomas Gordon, ruling elder ; from the presbytery of Garrioch, Mr Alexander Stewart at Lesly, Mr Robert Gauld at Culsamond, Mr John Shand at Kemnay, ministers, the Right Hon. the Lord Westhall, ruling elder ; from the presbytery of Deer, Mr George Moir at Peterhead, Mr William Frazer at Tyrie, Mr John Craigie at St Fergus, ministers, Mr John Taylor writer to the signet, ruling elder ; from the presbytery of Fordyce, Mr Robert Ogilvie at Ordiquhill, Mr Walter Chalmers at Deskford, ministers, Mr John Robertson writer in Edinburgh, ruling elder ; from the presbytery of Strathbogie, Mr Robert Innes at Huntly, Mr John Cooper at Glas, ministers, the Hon. Baron Gordon, ruling elder ; from the presbytery of Aberlour, Mr James Grant at Inveraven, Mr James Thomson at Aberlour, ministers, Mr Isaac Grant writer to the signet, ruling elder ; from the presbytery of Abernethy, Mr Lewis Grant at Cromdale, Mr Patrick Grant at Duthill, Dr Gregory Grant physician in Edinburgh, ruling elder ; from the presbytery of Elgin, Mr William Gordon at Urquhart, Mr William Peterkin at Elgin, ministers, Mr Thomas Gordon writer in Edinburgh, ruling elder ; from the burgh of Elgin, Mr Francis Grant preacher of the gospel ; from the presbytery of Forres, Mr Alexander Watt at Forres, Mr David Miln at Dollar, ministers, Bailie Duncan Grant in Forres, ruling elder ; from the burgh of Forres, Mr Ludovick Grant junior writer in Edinburgh ; from the presbytery of Nairn, Mr Patrick Dunbar at Nairn, Mr Hugh Calder at Croy, ministers, Hugh Rose of Kilravock, Esq; ruling elder ; from the presbytery of Inverness, Mr Malcolm Nicholson at Kiltarlity, Mr William Smith at Pettie, ministers, Simon Frazer of Taralarrie, Esq; advocate, ruling elder ; from the presbytery of Chanonry, Mr Thomas Simpson at Avoch, Mr Robert Arthur at Kirkmichael, ministers, Bailie John Walker merchant in Edinburgh, ruling elder ; from the presbytery of Abergath, Mr Patrick Grant at Boleskin, Mr James Grant at Laggan, ministers, Colquhoun Grant, Esq; writer to the signet, ruling elder ; from the presbytery of Sky, Mr Donald M'Queen at Kilmuir, Mr Martin M'Pherson at Slate, ministers, Andrew Crosbie of Holm, Esq; ruling elder ;

elder; from the presbytery of Lewis, Mr Alexander M'Kay at Barvas, Mr Hugh Munro at Uig, ministers, the Procurator for the Church, ruling elder; from the presbytery of Lochcarron, Mr Murdoch M'Iver at Lochallish, Mr Donald Munro at Lochcarron, ministers, John M'Kenzie of Applecross, Esq; ruling elder; and the General Assembly added thereto the Rev. Mr William M'Gill, one of the ministers of Ayr, in place of the moderator; and also added those gentlemen whose commissions were rejected by this Assembly on account of informality, viz. from the presbytery of Meigle, Mr John Halyburton at Kettins, Mr William Dow at Blairgowrie, Mr James Stormonth at Airly, ministers, and Mr Patrick Alison of Newhall, ruling elder, to be commissioners of this General Assembly, to the effect after mentioned; with power to the said Commissioners, or their quorum, which is hereby declared to be any thirty-one of the said Commissioners, whereof twenty-one are always to be ministers, to meet and convene within the Assembly-house at Edinburgh, the first day after the dissolution of this Assembly, at ten of the clock in the forenoon; and thereafter, the second Wednesday of August, third Wednesday of November, and the first Wednesday of March next to come, and oftner when and where they shall think fit and convenient, with power to the said Commissioners to chuse their own moderator: And likewise, the General Assembly fully impowers their said Commissioners, or their quorum above mentioned, to cognosce and finally determine, as they shall see cause, in every matter referred, or that shall be referred to them, by an act or order of this Assembly; and to do every thing contained in, and conform to the instructions given, or to be given by this Assembly; and to advert to the interest of the Church on every occasion, that the Church, and present establishment thereof, do not suffer or sustain any prejudice which they can prevent, as they will be answerable: Provided always, that this general clause be not extended to particular affairs or processes before synods or presbyteries, that are not of universal concern to, or influence upon, the whole Church. And it is hereby appointed, that no private processes be determined, except at the four stated diets; and what shall be determined at one diet of the Commission, with relation to private causes,

causes, shall be unalterable by any other diet thereof, and shall stand and continue in force till disapproved of by the General Assembly. And the Assembly renews the instructions given by the General Assembly in the year one thousand seven hundred and seventeen to their Commission, and appoints the same to stand in full force, as instructions to the Commissioners before named, and to be observed by them in all points, as if the same were specially here insert; and that they enquire into the publishing and spreading of books and pamphlets, tending towards the promoting of opinions of whatever kind, inconsistent with our *Confession of Faith*; and that the recommenders of such books or pamphlets, or the errors therein contained, whether by word, writ, or print, be called before the said Commission to answer for the same. And further, the said Commission is hereby impowered to receive any references and appeals that shall be made to them from synods, in matters of doctrine, and ripen such affairs for the next General Assembly; and to contribute what they can to the suppressing of vice and immorality, and give all needful advice and assistance to synods and presbyteries, upon application to them for that end: Likewise to take care that the impressions of the *Holy Scriptures*, the *Confession of Faith*, and *Catechisms*, and such books as are authorised by this Church, relating to the doctrine, worship, discipline, and government thereof, be correct; and give directions about printing the same. And the Commissioners are appointed and impowered to keep a correspondence with the committee for Reformation of the Highlands and Islands, for suppressing Popery and superstition, and for promoting the knowledge of true religion, and carrying on a reformation in these parts, and give assistance and concurrence therein; and if need be, to apply to the Government for a proper remedy and speedy redress. And the said Commissioners are hereby strictly prohibited and discharged to meddle in any other matters than what are committed and referred to them as above mentioned: And, in all their actings, they are to proceed according to the acts and constitution of this Church, and to do nothing contrary thereto, or to the prejudice of the same; declaring that, in and for all their actings, they shall be accountable to, and censurable by the next General Assembly,

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sembly, as they shall see cause. And the General Assembly appoints the said Commissioners, particularly to observe the acts of the General Assemblies one thousand seven hundred and twelve, and one thousand seven hundred and nineteen, respecting the application of the public money; which two acts are printed among the acts of Assembly one thousand seven hundred and sixty-one. And this Commission is to continue and endure until another Commission be appointed; and members are required to attend the diets of the said Commission; and absents therefrom are ordered to be noticed, according to the 17th act of the General Assembly held in the year one thousand seven hundred and six. And for the better securing of a quorum, and attendance of members on the Commission, the General Assembly prohibits the presbytery of Edinburgh, or any other presbytery within twelve miles thereof, to meet on any of the days or weeks appointed for the meeting of this Commission; and such of the members of these presbyteries as are on the Commission, are required, all of them, to give attendance on the diets thereof; and the presbyteries at a greater distance, who have four or more members on the Commission, are to take care, that at least two of them attend each diet of the same: And the General Assembly appoint their Commission, at their first meeting, to discuss as many of the causes and questions, relative to the settlements of vacant Churches, which are or shall be referred to them by the Assembly, as they can overtake. And it is further provided, that when any presbytery or synod of this Church shall decline to comply with the sentence of the Commission, or to give the same a full execution, in that case the Commission is hereby prohibited to execute the same, by appointing any such correspondent meeting, as has been some time the practice, but shall allow the same to lye over to the ensuing Assembly, to which such presbyteries or synods shall be answerable for such their conduct, and are hereby appointed to send up with their Commissioners their reasons for the same. And the Assembly doth further impower and direct the said Commission, to make due application to the King and Parliament for redress of the grievance of patronage, in case a favourable opportunity for so doing shall occur during the subsistence of this Commission: And that in
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passing their sentences, and in ordering the execution of the same, they strictly observe the 12th act of the Assembly one thousand seven hundred and thirty-six.

VII.

Interim act anent licensing Probationers.

THE General Assembly, in consequence of an overture from the synod of Merse and Tiviotdale, having taken into their serious consideration the dangerous consequences that would arise to this Church, if presbyteries were allowed to receive on trials young men who have never studied Divinity at an University, did, and hereby do, strictly prohibit all presbyteries from following such a practice; and ordain that this prohibition shall have the force of a law till next General Assembly.

VIII.

[The General Assembly re-transmits to presbyteries the following Overtures, and recommends it to them to pay particular attention thereto.]

Overture anent the Ordination of Elders.

THAT whereas great irregularities have crept into the Church, with respect to the Ordination of elders, it should be enacted, That no minister should set apart any person to that sacred office in his congregation, who has not a fixed residence in the parish, or such property in it as would entitle him to vote in the calling of a minister; it being the true meaning and intent of this overture to prevent elders being ordained in congregations who are in no way connected with them: And it being understood, that any city or town, where there

there are more congregations than one, shall be held as one parish, so far as respects the purpose of this overture.



X.

Overture anent licensing Probationers.

THE General Assembly, taking into their serious consideration the danger that ariseth to this Church, and to the souls of people, by licensing any to preach the gospel who are not duly qualified, according to the rules laid down in the Holy Scriptures; and considering that the several acts made by former General Assemblies, lye so scattered in many separate articles, at great distances from one another, that the directions therein given are in danger of being overlooked by presbyteries: Therefore the General Assembly, collecting what appears to them most material in former acts, ordain, That the following regulations shall be strictly observed by presbyteries in all time coming.

1mo, That no presbytery admit any person to probationary trials, but such as are found to be of good report, of sufficient learning, of sound principles, of a pious, sober, grave, and prudent behaviour, and of a peaceable disposition, and well affected to the government in Church and state, and of whom they have sufficient ground to conceive that they shall be useful and edifying in the Church, and that careful enquiry be made thereanent; and that without respect of persons, such as are esteemed to be light and vain in their behaviour, proud, worldly-minded, or unacquainted with the power of practical godliness, be kept back from that sacred work.

2do, That none be admitted to trials in order to be licensed, but such as have produced to the Professor of Divinity at the time of their being enrolled, either a diploma of Master of Arts, or a certificate, bearing that they have gone through a full course of philosophy at the College, and who have either given close attendance on

on the divinity-hall for the space of four years, from the time of their names being entered upon the roll of the presbytery as students of divinity; or, if their circumstances did not permit them to give close attendance on the hall, have continued to prosecute the study of divinity for six years, and have in that time delivered the usual number of discourses; provided also, that, at the time of their being admitted to trials, they are twenty-one years of age complete.

3^{to}, The General Assembly, considering the reproach that may be brought on religion in general, and particularly on this Church, by the unworthy behaviour of such as follow the study of divinity, do earnestly recommend to the presbyteries, professors of divinity, and ministers and members of this Church, to keep a watchful eye on such students, during the terms above specified. And further, that when any student comes to attend the professor of divinity in any university, he shall produce to the professor, and to the minister of the parish where he is to reside, during the time of his attendance on the profession, a testimonial from the minister of the parish from whence he comes; and when he leaves the profession, he shall carry back testimonials from the minister of the parish, of his grave and suitable behaviour becoming his character; and from the professor, testimonials certifying the same, and also his regular attendance on the diets of the profession, and the time he has attended. And when any professor of divinity shall think fit to recommend a student, in order to probationary trials, his testimonials shall certify his proficiency in his studies, and his moral character.

4^{to}, The General Assembly do appoint and ordain, That no presbytery admit any student to probationary trials, except such as have resided within their bounds for the space of six months, or do produce to them sufficient testimonials from the presbyteries in whose bounds they have lived, or for the most part resided, expressing, that it is the desire of these presbyteries that these students should be entered upon trials. And such students as come from abroad, shall produce satisfying testimonials from the professors under whom they studied; and the time of their being abroad shall be accounted a part of the six years; but none of these students shall be entered

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upon trials for the space of half a year after they come to Scotland.

5^{to}, When any student is proposed to a presbytery, in order to be taken on trials, the proposal shall lye on the table till the next ordinary meeting, before they give judgment therein, that diligent enquiry may be made, and information had concerning the said student's qualifications and behaviour; and the presbytery shall be alone when the proposal is made and judged on: And the General Assembly enjoins all students to take all opportunities of cultivating an acquaintance with the ministers of the presbytery where they reside, and where they are to pass trials.

6^{to}, When the presbytery, after serious enquiry and mature deliberation, shall agree to take the proposed candidate on trials, they shall examine him strictly and privately, in order to enable them to judge whether he possesses the piety, knowledge, abilities, and other qualifications necessary for a preacher of the gospel.

7^{mo}, The General Assembly appoints the same method to be observed, and trials to be taken in all the above particulars, before any presbytery recommend a student to pass trials in another presbytery.

8^{vo}, The General Assembly do also appoint and ordain, That the terms above specified being expired, and testimonials produced, and previous trials taken in manner above directed, the presbytery, before they prescribe any part of public trials, shall write letters to all the presbyteries within the bounds of the synod, acquainting them with their design, two months at least before sitting of the synod; and at the next meeting of the synod, they shall also acquaint the synod thereof, and obtain their special judgment and advice in that particular; and, that the members of the said presbytery and synod may be ripely advised thereanent, the General Assembly appoints the said letters to be duly and carefully transmitted to the several presbyteries, and that intimation thereof be publicly made at the first diet of the synod, to lye on the table till the second or some subsequent diet, and then particular enquiry be made whether any person have any thing to object against the student's being entered on trials for preaching the gospel. Provided always, That in any part of this Church, when synods meet

meet but once a-year, a student may be proposed to the synod half-a-year sooner than would have been competent if the synod had met twice a-year.

9^{mo}, The General Assembly recommends to presbyteries, that before any student is entered on trials, the engagements required by act 10th Assembly 1711, of such as are to be licensed, be read to them; and that the presbytery take promise of them, that they will subscribe to, and particularly observe the same, in case the presbytery see cause to licence them; and that this promise be recorded in their books.

10^{mo}, The General Assembly appoints the public probationary trials of students, who are to be licensed probationers, to be the following, viz. 1. The catechetic trials to be renewed in presence of the presbytery, and that previously to all the other parts of public trials. 2. A homily in English on a Scripture text. 3. An exegesis in Latin on a controverted head of Divinity, and sustaining a thesis and dispute thereon. 4. An exercise and addition. 5. A lecture on a large portion of Scripture. 6. A popular sermon on a particular text of Scripture. 7. A trial on chronology and Church history, especially the history of our own Church. *Lastly*, A trial on their knowledge of the Greek and Hebrew languages.

11^{mo}, The General Assembly, judging it fit that the same method shall be followed in all presbyteries as to questions put to, and engagements taken of probationers when licensed; and that the said probationers should not only give sufficient proof of their piety, literature, and other good qualifications for the sacred ministry, but also come under the strictest engagements to adhere to and maintain the doctrine, worship, discipline, and government of this Church: Do therefore enact and appoint, That the questions appointed by act 10th 1711, be put to all such as pass trials; and likewise that they shall subscribe the *Formula* set down in the said act, before they be licensed to preach the gospel. And the General Assembly strictly prohibits the licensing any person whatsoever, who shall not give explicit and satisfying answers to these questions, and subscribe the said *Formula*; and discharge any presbytery to make use of any other questions or *Formula*.

120m, When any presbytery, who, with the synod's allowance, has entered, or who is about to enter a student on trials, shall receive a letter from any presbytery, shewing their dissatisfaction with that student, and giving relevant grounds for the same, which they offer to verify to the presbytery at their next meeting, the said student shall not be licensed until the matter be tried. And the General Assembly appoints presbyteries, who shall receive such letters anent students from any other presbytery, to write a return with the first post after their meeting, acquainting them of their next diet.

3tio, That the acts concerning Simony be read before licensing any probationer.

14to, For the better observation of this act, it is particularly recommended to the professors of divinity, to communicate the contents thereof to their students in a public meeting annually, at such time, in the month of January, as to them seems most convenient. And all presbyteries and synods are peremptorily appointed to observe the same in all its parts: And it is strictly enjoined, that visitors of presbytery-books make strict enquiry how the several presbyteries do observe the same.

X.

Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

THE next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held within the New Church Ayle of Edinburgh, on Thursday the 23d day of May, in the year 1782.

Collected and extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

GEORGE WISHART, }
JOHN DRYSDALE, } *Cl. Eccl. Scot.*

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O F T H E

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May 24. 1781. Sess. 1st.

AFTER sermon by the Reverend Dr Hary Spens, Moderator of the last General Assembly, the ministers and elders convened in the Assembly-house; and, after prayer by the said Dr Hary Spens, Dr William Dalrymple, one of the ministers of Ayr, was chosen Moderator; and, at the Assembly's desire, took the chair.

The King's Commission to the Right Honourable George Earl of Dalhousie, to represent his Majesty's Royal person, read, and ordered to be recorded.

The King's most gracious letter to the Assembly read, and ordered to be recorded.

The Commissioner's speech, at opening this Assembly; and the Moderator's speech, in return thereto.

His Majesty's Royal warrant for L. 1000 Sterling, delivered in to the Assembly by his Grace the Commissioner, read, and ordered to be recorded.

The Reverend Dr William Gloag, one of the ministers of Edinburgh, unanimously appointed sub-clerk of Assembly, and clerk to the Committee for managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty, in place of Mr James Edmonstone, deceased.

Mr George Cairncross, writer in Edinburgh, unanimously appointed agent for the Church, in place of said Mr Edmonstone.

A Committee named for answering the King's most gracious letter.

The same Committee named to draw up an address to his Majesty, in congratulation of the birth of another Prince,

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Prince, and on account of the war in which Great Britain is at present engaged.

A Committee named for revising the commissions to the members of this Assembly, censuring absents from diets thereof, naming ministers to preach before his Grace the King's Commissioner, receiving in lists of the probationers in the several presbyteries, in order to their being recorded.

Committee for overtures named.

Committee for bills, references, and appeals, named.

Adjournment.

May 25. 1781. Sess. 2d.

Sederunt.

A diet spent in prayer.

New commissions produced.

Act VII. of Assembly 1718, for the better dispatch of the business of this Assembly, read, and the observation thereof enjoined.

Ministers named to preach before his Grace the Commissioner.

The Committees for overtures and bills appointed to meet this evening in their usual places.

Adjournment.

May 26. 1781. Sess. 3d.

Sederunt.

New commissions produced.

The report of the committee for overtures called for; the same was given in and read over.

The draught of an answer to the King's most gracious letter to this Assembly brought in and approved; and his Grace the Commissioner, at the Assembly's request, undertakes to transmit the same to his Majesty.

The draught of an address to his Majesty, in congratulation of the birth of another Prince, and on the present situation of public affairs, brought in and approved; and his Grace the Commissioner, at the Assembly's request, undertakes to transmit the same to his Majesty.

An objection to the commission from the presbytery of Meigle heard; the Assembly sustained the objection, and ordered the commissioner's names to be expunged from the roll.

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An objection to the commission from the burgh of Renfrew heard ; the Assembly repelled the objection, and sustained the commission.

An objection to the commission from the University of St Andrew's heard ; the Assembly repelled the objection, and sustained the commission.

The roll of causes transmitted by the committee for bills called for, produced, and read over.

Resolved to consider on Monday the commission from the burgh of Dunfermline, and after that Mr Lawson's cause, and the cause of Terregles first on Tuesday.

A committee named to revise the actings and proceedings of the Commission of the late General Assembly.

A committee named to revise the actings and proceedings of the committee appointed by last Assembly for managing the Royal Bounty for the reformation of the Highlands and Islands.

A committee named to audite the Procurator and Agent's accounts, consider the state of the public money, and prepare overtures about the same.

The committee for overtures impowered to receive in from the several members any instructions given to them by their respective synods or presbyteries, class the matters therein contained, and prepare overtures thereupon to the Assembly ; and receive in and consider any accounts that shall be given them of the state of the Church in the North Highlands, particularly concerning the growth of Popery and superstition, and prepare overtures for preventing or suppressing thereof.

The committee for bills appointed to meet on Monday morning at ten o'clock, and the committee for revising commissions to meet this evening at eight o'clock.

The report of the committee on translations and paraphrases from the sacred Scripture, given in and read ; bearing, That the committee have now prepared such a collection of sacred poems as they think may be submitted to the judgement of the Church ; the committee renewed, with additions thereto, and appointed to report their opinion of these poems, which are now printed,

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printed for the perusal of the members, at a future diet of Assembly.

Adjournment.

May 28. 1781. *Sess. 4th.*

Sederunt.

The report of the committee for overtures produced and read.

An objection to the commission from the presbytery of Stranrawer, which had formerly been revised, referred to the Assembly; and the Assembly named a committee, to consider whether a new revival can be allowed.

Agreed to consider, on Thursday, overtures from the synods of Glasgow and Ayr, Dumfries, and Perth and Stirling, relating to the mode of supplying vacant parishes.

Overtures from the synods of Lothian and Tweeddale, Merse and Tiviotdale, Moray, Perth and Stirling, Fife, Angus and Mearns, and from the presbytery of Dundee, anent licensing probationers, delayed till the report of returns from presbyteries to overtures transmitted is given in.

Instructions from the presbytery of Dumbarton, anent erecting new parishes, to lie on the table till the report of the committee on new erections is given in.

Report of the committee for bills called for, produced, and read.

Agreed to consider the cause of Carsphairn, after the cause of Fenwick, which is to be taken up immediately after Terregles.

A petition and complaint for Mess. James Thomson and Robert Fernie, ministers in Dunfermline, against the committee for bills, for refusing to transmit a petition and complaint to the Assembly against the minister, &c. of the Chapel of Ease there, read; recommended to the petitioners to give in a new petition to the committee, leaving out any complaint whatever; and only to crave what explanation they want, with respect to the act 1779, anent the Chapel of Ease.

Synod-books called for, but none of them were brought up; excuses offered and sustained for the absence of the

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synod-books of Moray, Sutherland and Caithness, Glasgow and Ayr, and Lothian and Tweeddale; resolved that the reasons for the absence of the rest be enquired into.

The committee on the window and house-tax continued, with the same powers, with additions thereto.

The committee on the Enzie fund continued with the same powers.

An appeal of Bailie William Hutton, merchant in Dunfermline, against the kirk-session of Dunfermline, for refusing to attest his commission from the burgh of Dunfermline, to represent the said burgh in this Assembly, heard; the commission sustained.

An appeal of Mr James Lawson, student in divinity, against a sentence of the presbytery of Auchterarder, rejecting his trials, and refusing him a licence to preach the gospel, heard; and a committee appointed to consider Mr Lawson's discourses, and to report.

Adjournment.

May 29. 1781. *Sess. 5th.*

Sederunt.

A new commission produced.

Report of the committee for bills called for, produced, and read.

Moved, that the low and indistinct voice with which many members of Assembly pronounce their votes, leaving it often a matter of doubt in what manner they have voted, that in future the agent for the Church should call the roll, and the sub-clerk should, immediately after the several members have pronounced their votes, repeat them with an audible voice; and the principal clerk should mark the votes, not from the voice of the members, but from that of the sub-clerk; unanimously agreed to by the Assembly, and ordered accordingly.

An appeal of William Duke of Queensberry, and of Mr John Kennedy preacher of the gospel, his Grace's presentee to the vacant church of Terregles, against a sentence of the synod of Dumfries, refusing to sustain a call to the said Mr Kennedy, heard; the sentence of the synod reversed, the call to the presentee sustained,

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ed, and the presbytery of Dumfries appointed to proceed, with all convenient speed, to the settlement of the presentee, according to the rules of the Church. The committee on public accounts, &c. appointed to meet to-morrow morning at half past nine o'clock in the Society-hall.

Adjournment.

May 30. 1781. *Sess. 6th.*

Sederunt.

A new commission produced.

Report of the committee appointed to consider the commission from the presbytery of Stranrazer produced and read; the committee appointed to meet again on Friday morning at half past nine.

The committee for overtures appointed to meet at ten on Friday morning.

The Procurator and Agent, and Printer's accounts produced, and ordered to lye upon the table.

The committee for bills appointed to meet to-morrow at ten o'clock.

An appeal of George Earl of Glasgow and his curators, and of Mr William Boyd preacher of the gospel, his Lordship's presentee to the vacant church of Fenwick, against a sentence of the synod of Glasgow and Ayr, of date 11th April last, "sisting all procedure in the settlement of the church of Fenwick, understanding thereby that the presentee is laid aside," heard; the sentence of the synod reversed, the concurrence with the presentee sustained, and the presbytery of Irvine appointed to proceed to the settlement of the presentee with all convenient speed, according to the rules of the Church; against which judgment several members dissented.

Agreed to consider the cause of Newburgh after the cause of Carlphairn, and after that the petition of the ministers of Dunfermline.

Adjournment.

May 31. 1781. *Sess. 7th.*

Sederunt.

A new commission produced.

Several members adhered to the dissent of yesterday, in the cause of Fenwick.

Report

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Report of the committee for bills called for, produced, and read ; and the petitions for aid out of the public funds remitted to the committee on public accounts. Report of the committee appointed to consider Mr Lawson's cause produced and read ; agreed to consider the same on Saturday.

Agreeable to the resolution of Monday last, the Assembly proceeded to consider the overtures from the synods of Glasgow and Ayr, Dumfries, and Perth and Stirling, anent the mode of supplying vacant parishes, &c. : They first considered the overture from Glasgow and Ayr, which was not supported by any of the members of the synod, nor by any members of Assembly ; the Assembly dismissed the said overture as incompetent, and of a dangerous tendency : Against the last clause of which sentence some members dissented.

The overture from the synod of Dumfries, and the last clause of the overture from the synod of Perth and Stirling, as containing matter of a similar nature, next considered ; the Assembly dismissed the same.

The remaining part of the overture from the synod of Perth and Stirling afterwards considered ; the Assembly found this part of the overture unnecessary, as what it proposed was already sufficiently secured by the standing rules of the Church, and dismissed the same.

The committee on new applications appointed to meet to-morrow, at half past nine, in the Society-hall ; and the committee on the Enzie fund to meet at ten in the same place.

Adjournment.

June 1. 1781. Sess. 8th.

Sederunt.

Dissents from the sentence on the overture from the synod of Glasgow and Ayr.

Report of the committee appointed to consider the overtures anent new erections, called for ; Dr M'Farlane conveener, made a verbal report, and referred to a memorial given in by the committee, to the Secretary for the Board of Annexed Estates ; the committee continued.

Report of the trustees of the widow's fund produced,
and

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and ordered to lye on the table for the perusal of the members.

The report of the committee on translations and paraphrases from Scripture, produced, and read; the report agreed to, and the committee continued, to make what corrections they may think necessary, on the paraphrases printed; and thereafter to transmit copies of the same to presbyteries, for their perusal: The printer for the Church to have the sole privilege of printing and publishing these translations and paraphrases for the space of five years.

Report of the committee for overtures called for, produced, and read.

*The sub-committee's report of returns to the overture concerning the ordination of elders, and the overture concerning the licensing of probationers; these two overtures re-transmitted. *Vide printed Acts.*

Proceeded to consider the overture from the synod of Merse and Tiviotdale, anent licensing probationers; the Assembly agreed to turn the said overture into an interim act. *Vide printed Acts.*

Report of the committee appointed to enquire into the method of revising commissions, and to propose amendments to the proceedings of that committee, given in, and read; and approved of by the Assembly.

Agreed to consider the reference from the synod of Lothian and Tweeddale on Monday next.

An appeal of John Newall, Esq; of Barskeoch, and of Mr Robert Affleck, preacher of the gospel, his presentee to the vacant parish of Carsphairn, against a sentence of the presbytery of Kirkcudbright, of date 2d May 1781, refusing to sustain the call in favour of the presentee, and finding they could not proceed farther in his settlement, heard; the sentence of the presbytery reversed, the concurrence with the presentee sustained, and the presbytery appointed to proceed to the settlement of the presentee with all convenient speed, according to the rules of the Church. Against which judgement several members dissented.

Adjournment.

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June 2. 1781. Sess. 9.

Sederunt.

Several members adhered to the dissents of yesterday, in the cause of Carisphairn.

A new commission produced.

The dissenters in the cause of Carisphairn allowed to give in their reasons of dissent on Monday.

Reasons of dissent from the sentence respecting the settlement of Fenwick, given in, and openly read, and ordered to lye *in retentis*.

Upon a motion, the Assembly unanimously found Mr George Cairncross entitled to the vacant salaries of sub-clerk to the Assembly, and agent for the Church, since the death of Mr Edmonstone; and authorised the Procurator for the Church to pay the said salaries to him, and to take credit for the same in his account with the Church.

Act approving of the account of Mr William Robertson advocate, Procurator for the Church, and exonerating and discharging Mr Robertson of the sum received by him, and appointing that he debit himself, in his next account, with the sum of L. 67 : 13 : 0 $\frac{1}{2}$ Sterling, being the balance due by him.

Act approving the account of Mr George Cairncross, Agent for the Church, and appointing that he debit himself, in his next account, with the sum of L. 7 : 14 : 6 Sterling, being the balance due by him.

Two accounts due to Mr James Dickson, printer to the Church, ordered to be paid.

The report of the committee named to consider the applications for shares of the public money given in and read; which being considered by the Assembly, they found, that, in respect of the resolution of the two former Assemblies, and the present state of the fund, these new applications cannot be complied with at present.

Upon a motion by a member of the Committee appointed to consider the state of the Church's public money, and which was unanimously agreed to, the Moderator, in name of the Assembly, returned their sincere thanks to Mr Ludovick Grant junior, writer in Edinburgh, for the care and attention he had paid to these funds for several years past, and earnestly entreated

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entreated him to persevere in his diligence and attention to that affair.

Dr John Drysdale discharged of the sum of L. 20 : 11 : 9 Sterling, being the balance remaining in his hands of the fund for enabling students having the Galic language to prosecute their studies.

The report of the Committee for naming the members of the Commission, and preparing instructions for them, given in and approved of.

The report of the visitors of the commission-book given in and read; and the commission's conduct approved: The Assembly's thanks given from the chair to the Moderator of the commission, for their faithfulness and diligence in the affairs committed to them, and their book ordered to be attested.

The report of the visitors of the Royal Bounty Register called for; the conduct of the managers approved of, and their book ordered to be attested.

Committee named for managing the Royal Bounty this year, with a commission and instructions to them.

The report of the trustees for managing the fund for a provision to minister's widows, &c. containing a state of the fund under their management, and an account of their proceedings since last Assembly, again called for, and ordered to be recorded in the separate register kept for that purpose.

The Assembly resumed the consideration of the report of the committee appointed to consider Mr Lawson's discourses; the report was read; the Assembly agreed to said report, and affirmed the sentence of the presbytery of Aucherarder, refusing to grant Mr Lawson a licence.

An appeal of the Bailies and Town Council of Newburgh, against two sentences of the synod of Fife, heard; the sentence of the synod reversed, and the cause remitted to the synod of Fife, to take in and consider said appeal at their first ordinary meeting.

The petition of Messrs James Thomson and Thomas Fernie ministers of Dunfermline, heard; the petition dismissed as incompetent.

Adjournment.

June

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June 4. 1781. *Seff. ult.*

Sederunt.

Reasons of dissent from the sentence respecting the settlement of Carlsphairn given in, and openly read, and ordered to be kept *in retentis*.

Reasons of Dissent from the sentence on the last clause of the overture from the synod of Glasgow and Ayr, given in, and openly read, and ordered to be kept *in retentis*.

List of probationers produced, and ordered to be recorded.

Recommended to presbyteries to be more careful in sending up exact lists of probationers for the future on the back of the commissions.

The Assembly ordered all the synod-books to be sent up to next Assembly.

The Assembly proceeded to consider the reference from the synod of Lothian and Tweeddale, anent irregular marriages, and regulations on the subject; the Assembly remitted the consideration thereof to a committee, and appointed them to report to next Assembly.

All causes brought before this Assembly, and not determined by them, and causes remitted by former Assemblies, and not determined, referred to the Commission, with power to them to judge and finally determine therein.

Protestations admitted.

A committee named to revise the minutes of the Assembly's proceedings at this and all the other diets thereof, and to pitch upon such of the Acts of Assembly as are to be standing rules, in order to their being printed.

The minutes of this day's sederunt were read; the minutes of former sederunts being read at the diets subsequent thereto.

The Moderator's speech to the General Assembly, and his Majesty's Commissioner.

The Lord Commissioner's speech to the Assembly.

Act appointing next diet of Assembly.

The Assembly concluded with prayer and singing a psalm.